All Protecta® EVO® Stations utilize a proprietary single lock design, removable tray for quick service, and proven dog and child tamper-resistance.

Pre-installed with a custom molded concrete brick, the EVO® Express™ offers a professional appearance for accounts that require anchored bait stations.

Even with its low-profile design, the EVO® Ambush™ still allows room for the Trapper T-Rex snap trap.

To aid in its disguise, simulated connectors slide into the sides of the EVO® Circuit™, making it appear as an electrical box.
KEEPING TODAY’S CUSTOMER TOMORROW
By Jackson Griffith, Clark Pest Control
As a company, it might make better sense to focus all your efforts toward the technical aspects of pest management—identifying pests, correcting conditions that allow pests to thrive, and treating to remove pests. But what often gets lost is the idea that excellence in pest management, as a sustainable model for business, depends primarily upon keeping customers satisfied and, yes, happy.

TIPS FOR MARKETING ON A BUDGET
By Cindy Mannes, Arrow Exterminators
No matter what percentage you assign to marketing, every dollar is precious. Your marketing investment drives sales, leads and “makes the phone ring” when you spend it wisely! As a small operator who wears a lot of hats, how do you know where to start?

SOCIAL MEDIA’S GLASS HOUSE
By Ray Johnson, Johnson Pest Control
In the glass house that is social media, we have to go the extra mile to make sure our customers are more than satisfied…because your customers will talk about it.
One year ago, we told you about the creation of NPMA’s strategic plan. And, we told you that in order to achieve the goals set forth in that plan, your staff would develop a tactical roadmap. This roadmap would become where the rubber meets the road. And boy did it ever.

If you attended PestWorld 2013, you probably noticed the most overt change made this year—which is the creation and implementation of our new logo and tagline “our mission is your protection”—but that is just the tip of the iceberg.

From hiring new staff to better support your advocacy, technical, and membership needs, to establishing a career center to aid in your search for qualified employees, to reinvigorating our meetings and events, to finding ways to work more effectively with our partners—your staff has focused solely on providing you with the best membership experience possible. We are also excited to offer, through our partnership with the Entomological Society of America, access to the Associated Certified Entomologist certification—which elevates our entire profession.

Additionally, we’ve got some great programs already planned for next year, including a membership web portal showcasing new and improved benefits, an enhanced online learning center, and new conferences focused on issues that impact you daily.

You—our members—have made a tremendous commitment to us year after year by renewing your membership in the association. And all of you have made tremendous personal commitment by participating in NPMA events, engaging in advocacy efforts, and spending your personal time by contributing to committees, writing articles, providing training opportunities, and so much more. It is with my deepest appreciation that I thank you for this support. We couldn’t do it without you.

We’ve got some great programs already planned for next year, including a membership web portal showcasing new and improved benefits, an enhanced online learning center, and new conferences focused on issues that impact you daily.

For advertising information, call Janay Rickwalder at (571) 224-0384 or e-mail jrickwalder@pestworld.org.
ALL ACES

deal yourself a winning hand against fleas

Go all in with Precor® and Zenprox® products in your flea control protocols. If you tank mix, use Precor® IGR with Zenprox® EC. For spot or crack and crevice treatments, use Precor 2000® Plus, a premise spray that includes an IGR and two adulticides. Precor® products penetrate deep where fleas lay their eggs for long lasting control of pre-adult populations and Zenprox® EC kills adult fleas on contact with a residual that can last up to a month.

To learn more about Zenprox® EC and Precor® products visit zoecon.com or call 800.248.7763.
hat simple truth, however, is often too easy to overlook. As a company, it might make better sense to focus all your efforts toward the technical aspects of pest management—identifying pests, correcting conditions that allow pests to thrive, and treating to remove pests. But what often gets lost is the idea that excellence in pest management, as a sustainable model for business, depends primarily upon keeping customers satisfied and, yes, happy.

You can have the most effective pest management technicians on the planet. But unless they’re connecting with the customers they serve, in a way that resonates positively, it’s only a matter of time before you start losing some of them to other companies that perform the customer service part better, or at least better than your technicians are doing it.

If you’re doing the technical part to near-perfection, your customers might get the idea that they no longer have a problem with pests. And if they no longer think they have a problem with the pests they hired you to control, it’s all too easy for them to embrace the idea that they don’t need your services—at all.
So by putting an emphasis on providing excellent customer service, while delivering the superior technical service your customers expect, you’re helping to ensure that your customers today will remain your customers tomorrow.

“I always go under the assumption of: ‘Would you pay for the service that you just provided?’ That’s one of my levels of expectations for where a technician would be,” says Mike Parker, Director of Quality Assurance at Clark Pest Control. “At the end of the day, is that service you just provided, if you saw it performed at your home, something you would be satisfied with? Would you be willing to pay for that if it was your mother’s house, or a business you built from the ground up?”

Engaging those customers and developing relationships with them takes work, of course. Some technicians have a natural ability to connect with the people they serve, while others seem much more at ease if they can show up, make their way around a property performing a service, and then quietly leave a note that explains what actions they’ve taken. This variation between technicians in their abilities to engage customers may make it harder to deliver a consistent company-wide standard of customer service. That’s why it’s vital to develop a culture within the company that emphasizes exceptional customer service across the board.

Naturally, that exceptional customer service starts with good listening. Your customers can tell a technician what kind of pest activity or evidence they’ve been seeing, or hearing. They also can give that technician a good idea of what they expect from a pest management provider, along with any things they might prefer to avoid. Training technicians to listen to customers actively will translate into better service.

Getting those technicians to ask customers the right questions can help sharpen that picture. More information is always a good thing, especially if it helps the technician zero in on precisely how to deliver superior service.

But a key element to providing great service has to do with the way that service is performed, from a theatrical point of view. Customers, and potential customers nearby, are watching. So the way a technician goes about performing a pest service can make an impact, perhaps the kind that will ensure that a customer stays on service. Thus, from the moment the technician rolls up to the house to the time the technician drives away, it’s showtime.

When an actor is performing onstage in a theater, every moment counts; it’s important the people in the audience see that the actor knows what he or she is doing. Going through a set of movements and performing various tasks is called business.

This business, theatrically speaking, for the technician is all those action items that make up a pest service—de-webbing eaves, inspecting the property for evidence of pests, hand-can treating certain areas, power spraying other areas, and all the specific actions that come about as the result of identifying specific pest activity. Going through the business of the service purposefully, in a way that demonstrates to the customer that the technician knows what they are doing, reinforces any confidence the customer has that they hired the right pest management provider.

Adding a few thoughtful little extras when a technician is going about a service can make a big difference, too. Emptying a pet’s water dish and putting it in a safe place, then refilling it when the service is done, demonstrates a measure of conscientiousness. Picking up a child’s toys does, too, as does de-webbing a child’s playset, or moving emptied trash receptacles from the curb back to the place where they usually rest, or picking up a newspaper and placing it on the doorstep or handing it to a customer. Even helping a customer with grocery bags when they return from a shopping trip can help make a positive impression.

Parker uses a basic yardstick, his company’s mission statement. “Did we go above and beyond what the customer expected,” he asks, “like Mr. Clark’s mission statement says—by exceeding our customers’ expectations?”

Giving good customer service should be a basic tenet of pest management, on that inspires a customer’s confidence in your company.
Of course, making a shift toward providing better services to customers can be difficult, unless you are receiving some kind of systematic feedback from those customers, feedback that tells you specifically how the improvements in customer service that you have implemented are working.

Tools like the Net Promoter® System, which polls customers on their loyalty to your company by asking them, on a scale of zero to ten, if they would recommend your services to others, can really help sharpen the picture of how well your technicians are connecting with their customers. By also asking those customers to critique your company’s services in their own words, you can gain valuable insights on what you’re doing right—and wrong—which can help a company design a roadmap that leads to vastly improved customer service.

Clark Pest Control has been using Net Promoter® System for a while, and according to Parker, it’s provided plenty of useful information. “I think that NPS is bringing to light our inadequacies,” he says, “as far as customer relations, customer service, types of pest problems that we’re having—where we need to improve or become more educated, as far as our technicians go. It also shows the areas where supervisors need to follow up on certain situations, and be more aware, and it’s helping the branches determine ways to provide better training.”

The bottom line, however, hinges on the importance of building and cultivating relationships with customers. “A good relationship between pest management provider and the customer is the core of customer satisfaction,” says Nicole Keefe, Clark Pest Control’s Director of Marketing and Advertising. “The pest service has to be good, but sometimes if it’s only good pest control service without a good relationship, it becomes invisible service. The customer relationship allows us to avoid becoming a commodity, and instead, we become their trusted partner in pest management.”

Jackson Griffith is the Marketing and Advertising Copywriter for Clark Pest Control.
TIPS FOR Marketing ON A BUDGET
That is the challenge—how to spend it wisely so you see the return on your investment. There are a lot of folks who bombard you daily via phone, e-mail and even drop-ins all trying to convince you that they have the “best advertising/marketing” opportunity for you. But do they? How do you decide?

As a small operator, who wears a lot of hats, it can be overwhelming to take the time to sit down and think about your marketing efforts for the coming year, but that’s just what we’re going to do. Attempt to plan out a marketing budget for your company and spend your money wisely. So let’s get started.
1 FIND A QUIET PLACE
Turn off all of your electronic devices (just like on a plane!).

2 REVIEW YOUR PLAN
Take some time to review your Mission, Vision and Core Values. If you don’t have them, may I suggest that is where you want to begin before you attempt to review your existing marketing tactics.

Your Mission and Vision are roadmaps that keep you on track. Your core values define your company’s culture and impact your bottom line. Core values are your set of guiding principles you use to manage your decision making.

3 BACK TO YOUR MARKETING PLAN
Take some time to write down and review what you did last year with your marketing efforts and determine what worked, what sort of worked and what you would never do again. Doesn’t matter the size of your company, we all need to sort through how we spend our marketing investment to generate leads and make the phone ring!

Stay focused on what drove leads and made the phone ring. If you used some traditional media efforts such as Direct mail, billboards, radio, TV, or Public Relations—what worked? If you moved into the digital or social media space again determine what worked for you.

THE FACE OF THE 2014 CUSTOMER

BY JENIFER McCAULEY, McCAULEY SERVICES, INC.

Has the face of the 2014 Customer really changed? I think what’s changing are the mediums we use to reach and communicate with our consumers and clients. I think people still want to feel a personal connection. In 2014 we’re introduced to wearable technology while existing technologies like smart homes, and popular apps will become smarter—2014 is our opportunity to align our marketing messages and tactics with these dynamic new mediums to better connect with our customer.
Interview your partners in these areas and get specific. Dig deep to see what they can offer you to get you in front of your customers and potential customers in the coming year and stay focused on what it is YOU want to accomplish. Every sales person worth their salt should be able to sell you their product. So YOU need to stay focused on your particular objectives.

**4 PLAN FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR**

Put into **writing** your primary objectives—keep it simple—maybe three or four. They could be anything from increasing your brand (name) recognition in your community; becoming the go-to expert on pest control in your community or focusing on a new geography (market).

Once you’ve developed your objectives, “think big” about tactics. You can always rein them in at a later time based on reality (we’ll come back to that).

There are many tactics available that are just as effective for small budgets as large. Very local and very super focused marketing initiatives drive results. A few things to get you started from a tactical standpoint:

Here is a checklist of things I’ll be considering this month as I lay out our marketing strategies for 2014.

- **CREATE LOCAL AND COMMUNITY DRIVEN MESSAGES**—Customers become more engaged with my brand when we’re closer to home and relate to their lifestyle. How can I use the tools in technology to create this customer interaction with their local technician? Scalable? I think so.

- **INCLUDE CAUSE MARKETING IN MY STRATEGIES**—Customer sentiment towards socially responsible companies is powerful especially when I can get customers direct participation!

- **BE ACCESSIBLE TO THE DIGITAL SHOPPERS**—Can consumers buy from my brand via PayPal? Can they access my service info and pricing through shopping apps, or at the very least through our mobile site (mobile sites are so 2 years ago—if you don’t have one by now call me!)?

- **TAP INTO YOUR EXISTING CLIENT BASE**—Using many of the same technologies as in your marketing plan you can build more intimate relationships with your existing clients! Consumers are becoming increasingly aware of how their feedback can help or hurt your brand. Happy customers are always eager to help and rarely expect anything in return but how much more likely are they to share their experiences, reviews, and referrals when they are recognized and praised for their advocacy.
1. Word of mouth is still the number one way—big or small—that companies acquire new customers. Ask your current customers for referrals and offer them an incentive. Make sure it is an incentive that will encourage multiple referrals. Visa gift cards, gas cards and even movie tickets are great ideas.

2. Sell new services to your existing customers. Leave-behinds, direct mail and outbound telemarketing are great ways to reach your existing customers with new offers and/or seasonal services such as mosquito and wildlife.

3. Become the go-to expert on pest control for the local media in your area. This is a great way to get your name out and build credibility. Hot topics that often generate media interest are termites, mosquitoes, stinging insects and wildlife. Be sure to include tips that homeowners can do themselves as well.

4. Identify other service related companies that have a strong and positive brand in your area and explore partnership opportunities. How can you help grow their business while they help you grow your business as well?

5. Sponsor local events where your existing and potential customers live, work and play. Be sure your activation includes more than just a “logo” in the program. You want to be at events handing out your literature and meeting people. Having an “Enter to Win” drawing is a great way to gather leads as well and you only need one prize to give away at the end.

6. Get involved with the local schools. Kids LOVE bugs, teachers LOVE guest speakers and parents are all potential customers. There are many presentations and interactive activities you can do for all ages around pests.
COMMIT BUT BE FLEXIBLE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

One you have decided on your tactics, commit to the plan. It is easy to get distracted, so build your timelines and execute against set deliverables. Make sure the message you communicate is clear, consistent and reflects who you are as a company. But, having said that, you do need to leave some room for flexibility in the plan. If a tactic just isn’t working well, then move on sooner rather than later. Or, you may come across a new opportunity that fits perfectly within your strategy and will help you reach your objectives. You shouldn’t pass on that just because it wasn’t in your original plan.

Ultimately, there are many effective ways to reach your existing and potential customers and stay within your established marketing budget. Putting a program in place that works for you and your business will build a solid foundation for success.

Cindy Mannes is the Chief Marketing and Strategy Officer for Arrow Exterminators.
Record Breaking Exhibit Hall at PestWorld 2013

Over 3,000 pest management professionals navigated NPMA’s largest trade show yet—with 173 exhibitors and over 100,000 square feet of exhibit space—during PestWorld 2013, held last week in Phoenix.

Proving itself once again as the premier platform to conduct domestic and international business in the pest management industry, exhibitors and attendees alike reported PestWorld 2013 to be “the most cost-effective and efficient way to do business, shop for new products and services, and stay on the cutting edge of industry technology.”

With expert-led educational sessions, attendees discovered the latest business trends and earned valuable recertification credits. Additionally, PestWorld featured General Session speakers Jordan Belfort and Stephen Dubner.

“The packed educational sessions and keynote addresses and the well-attended special events demonstrate the industry’s desire for an event with an emphasis on learning and networking,” said NPMA Executive Vice President Bob Rosenberg.

New Bylaws Adopted at Annual Membership Meeting

At the Annual Membership Meeting held during PestWorld, members voted unanimously to repeal the NPMA constitution and adopt the proposed bylaws. The new bylaws are effective immediately. Additionally, NPMA presented the draft 2012/2013 Audit Report to the membership.

Thank you to all members who attended the important meeting and submitted proxies to allow NPMA to move forward with governing documents that are modern and relevant. We appreciate your stewardship of NPMA.

Initial Meeting of NPMA Succession Planning

The initial meeting of the NPMA Succession Planning Committee occurred on Tuesday to find a replacement for Bob Rosenberg who plans on retiring at the end of 2015. The committee is chaired by Chuck Tindol and includes Donnie Blake, Norman Goldenberg, Chris Gorecki, Russ Ives, Justin McCauley, Bert Putterman, Billy Tesh, and Emily Thomas Kendrick.

The Committee will begin soliciting applications for NPMA’s Executive Vice President position in October 2014 with the goal of making a final decision by July 2015. For more information please contact Chuck Tindol at ctindol@allgoodpc.com.
2013 Award Recipients Announced

During its annual awards ceremony at PestWorld, several key awards were presented, including the Pinnacle Award, the Women of Excellence Award, the Young Entrepreneur Award, the Committee of the Year Award, and the Chairperson of the Year Award.

Victor Hammel was presented with NPMA’s highest honor—the 2013 Pinnacle Award. The award, NPMA’s most coveted and prestigious accolade, honors an individual who has contributed not only to the success of the association but to the industry as a whole over a lifetime or career.

“Victor has embraced the core principal of leaving things better than he found them throughout his life—and every single one of us has been affected by what he has accomplished.”

—NPMA President Kevin Pass in his remarks

Marie Horner of The Terminix Company in Greensboro, North Carolina, was the recipient of the 2013 Women of Excellence Award, presented by Orkin. This award recognizes female pest management professionals who demonstrate outstanding leadership and have made notable contributions to the development and growth of other women in the industry.

Ryan Bradbury of Viking Termite and Pest Control in Bound Brook, New Jersey, received the 2013 Young Entrepreneur Award, presented by Rentokil North America. The Young Entrepreneur Award recognizes young entrepreneurs (40 years of age or less) working in the professional pest management industry who have helped create or develop an industry business and/or those who have stewarded a meaningful industry concept to fruition.

NPMA’s Wood Destroying Organisms Committee was awarded Committee of the Year and Cindy Mannes of the NPMA Marketing Committee was awarded Chairperson of the Year.

Please join us in congratulating these recipients! Information about the 2014 Awards Program will be available this Spring.

Top to bottom: Committee Chair of the Year Cindy Mannes, Marketing Committee; Committee of the Year Wood Destroying Organisms; Woman of Excellence Award Recipient Marie Horner; Young Entrepreneur Award Recipient Ryan Bradbury
PPMA Supports Industry Growth at PestWorld

The Professional Pest Management Alliance (PPMA) successfully demonstrated during PestWorld how they are growing the pie for the entire pest management industry in their pie themed booth and with a lively musical presentation, led by Russ Ives and supported by the PPMA Board of Directors. In addition, PPMA shared results of their impact so far this year in market growth with number including:

- 33% of homeowners (with a household income greater than $75K) used professional pest control, up from 30% last year and up from 18% when PPMA first gathered such data in 2004.
- PPMA’s messages have been seen 2.1 billion times this year, up from 1.1 billion times at this time last year.
- 29% of homeowners reported they would be EXTREMELY or VERY likely to use a pest professional in the future, up from 18% in 2010 (the last year the complete omnibus study was done).
- 57% of homeowner reported they had a favorable impression of the industry vs. 40% of people who expressed that opinion three years ago.

PPMA is indeed supporting the industry’s growth. Thank you to the 320 companies who are making this possible for the entire industry! If you’d like to be part of this momentum—and get help for your company as well—please contact Missy Henriksen at mhenriksen@pestworld.org or call (703) 352-6762.

To learn more about the Pest Management Foundation and the research it supports, or to make a donation, visit www.npmapestworld.org/support/foundation.cfm

Pest Management Foundation Auction Results

The exciting live auction at the PestWorld 2013 Final Night Banquet raised more than $18,000 to benefit the Pest Management Foundation. The top bidders took away exciting packages such as NPMA PestWorld 2014 Package for Two donated by NPMA; Indianapolis 500 Race Package donated by Dow; The Big Apple Experience donated by Assured Environments, The Bug Doctor and the New York Pest Management Association; A Taste of Napa Valley donated by Allgood Pest Solutions, BB&T Insurance Services, Cook’s Pest Control, Residex, Rollins Inc., Syngenta, Arrow Exterminators and TAP Insulation.

The Pest Management Foundation is a charitable organization affiliated with NPMA. Over the last three decades, the Foundation has funded valuable research that has greatly benefited the pest management industry.
In today’s transparent world, are you comfortable with what’s being said about your company, considering social media? There are many platforms to keep track of, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Pinterest, Angie’s List and Google+. As service professionals, we need to be diligent to ensure our entire team—from those who answer the phone to the field representatives—constantly provides excellent customer service.

Consider what people post online about their lives:

■ “Well, we’re just now leaving the restaurant and got the worst service ever.”
■ “Don’t use XYZ company because they ripped us off royally.”
■ “My pest control company provides the best customer service, and their employees are top-notch!”

In the glass house we’re destined to live in as a result of social media, we have to go the extra mile to make sure our customers are more than satisfied. Does your company talk about and equip all employees to be aware they’re the face of the company and every action could be scrutinized or praised?

You must be on top of any good or bad information that comes to light. Make sure you respond to each review your company gets—good, bad or otherwise. Some companies have even gone as far as hiring outside firms to monitor what’s being reported about their customer service. Many have hired an in-house marketing staff to handle advertising placement and ensure social media campaigns are firmly in place and on solid ground. I suggest a three-pronged plan to respond and face this social media mountain:

1. Become aware of what’s being said about your company.
2. Respond to each review in a timely and positive manner.
3. Provide the best customer service experience you can, from the initial contact to the completed service.

Be sure others will talk about you. Because it’s human nature to quickly share bad news, we must work more diligently to make sure the public shares the good news, too. To achieve the public’s high expectations, constant training is essential, so keep documented records that each employee has received training.

My wife, Tammy, recently held a telephone etiquette training session with our frontline staff to hone their skills. She reminded them their smile needs to come through the phone line and all calls made to our office should be handled with a “do unto others” customer-care attitude. Always have proven systems in place to monitor your company’s level of customer service, and involve your customers in your social media reviews. The most important aspect of a service industry like ours is delivering a remarkable service experience with each contact to ensure we’ll keep our customers, keep them happy and keep our online reputation impeccable.

Ray Johnson is the President of Johnson Pest Control.
In the glass house we’re destined to live in as a result of social media, we have to go the extra mile to make sure our customers are more than satisfied.
MARKETING CORNER

MARKET SEGMENTATION:
ADAPTING YOUR MESSAGE TO NEW AND DIFFERENT AUDIENCES

Today, marketers and business owners are executing marketing strategies that are very different from what they were 10 or 20 years ago. With the proliferation of the Internet and social media, new marketing channels have opened up a way of connecting with consumers and potential customers like never before. However, there is one constant that remains the same—knowing the customer. In order to truly penetrate different market segments, businesses must start thinking not just about different methods of connecting with customers, but what differences and preferences exist among those customers based on generational, gender and ethnic variations as well.

As the face of America changes, so do consumer demographics and the way businesses interact with their target audiences. While homeowners will always remain one of the main targets of the pest management industry, who those homeowners are, what their needs and preferences are and the most effective means of reaching them are changing. It is essential that business owners consider those changes when developing and executing their marketing strategies.

Generational Marketing
Currently, there are four generations businesses are trying to reach: the Silent Generation (1925–1945), the Baby Boomers (1946–1964), Generation X (1965–1980) and Generation Y or Millennials (1980–2000).

Because each of these segments of the population approaches spending money differently, businesses must be strategic in the way they communicate their messages to them.

Silents
This generation was born into some of the toughest times in the nation—times of war and during the Great Depression. The members of this segment are financially conservative and savers by nature. The best way to communicate with the Silents is through more traditional methods of communication, whether in written or face-to-face form and demonstrate how a company’s services are convenient and accessible to that generation. Once trust is established, this generation will remain loyal as they don’t like change.

Baby Boomers
Unlike their parents, this generation didn’t experience dire economic times. They strive for perfection and work hard to live a good life and on their own terms. The best way to approach this group is to show them how professional pest control makes their lives easier, almost instantly, and to show them the value of such services. Connecting with them on a personal, emotional level while not overselling is the ideal approach for Boomers.

Generation X
Gen X-ers consider themselves survivors. They grew up in an era of immense societal and
economic change and survived. Their ambition and independence serves them well today as they climb the corporate ladder while struggling to find a work-life balance. Marketers would do well to share information with this segment through a variety of means and share it often. As the Internet is seamlessly integrated into every facet of their lives, this generation is best marketed to through up-to-date digital channels.

**Generation Y or Millenials**

The “me” generation is perhaps the most consumerist of all the groups and because of that tend to be loyal to brands. As their earning power increases, they will begin to look to services which can make their lives easier—such as professional pest control. With their estimated $170 million dollar purchasing power, Millenials hold a lot of marketing potential. Marketing to them through digital channels is the way to go, but marketers have to work harder as this segment tends to be more skeptical of advertising than the previous generations. Creativity is key!

**Other Demographic Differentiators**

Generational segmentation is not the only challenge marketers face. Race and gender also play important roles in strategic marketing to consumers.

According to the Pew Research Center, by 2050, the nation’s racial and ethnic makeup will change dramatically. Non-Hispanic whites, who made up 67 percent of the population in 2005, will represent only 47 percent in 2050. Hispanics will rise from 14 percent of the population in 2005 to 29 percent in 2050. African-Americans made up 13 percent of the population in 2005 and will be roughly the same proportion in 2050. Asians, who represented 5 percent of the population in 2005, will grow to 9 percent in 2050.

The purchasing power of women, always an important market segment, has grown even more in recent years. In 2012, a Harvard Business Review report found that women controlled $4.3 trillion of consumer spending in the U.S. While in 2013, a survey from Ginger Consulting found that women are responsible for or influence $7 trillion in annual consumer and business purchases in the United States. They also influence more than 85 percent of all products and services purchased, including 60 percent of automobile and 40 percent of stock purchases. In addition, more than two-thirds of women say that budgetary constraints are forcing them to hunt for value in regard to every purchase.

Taking these groups into account, marketers must understand that now more than ever personalized efforts are the only way to succeed. Translating collateral from English to Spanish or making something more feminine-looking is simply not going to work. To really get into the mind of these and other demographics, marketers must understand the cultural and gender influences that form buying opinions and adapt their strategies to connect on a deeper level.

Making a specific investment in understanding these segments of the population may seem challenging at first, but if done correctly can give businesses healthy results.

Currently, there are four generations businesses are trying to reach: the Silent Generation (1925–1945), the Baby Boomers (1946–1964), Generation X (1965–1980) and Generation Y or Millenials (1980–2000).

**Attitudes Toward the Professional Pest Control Industry**

An important step towards understanding the mindset of different segments of potential customers is to first understand their perception of the professional pest control industry. According to a 2010 Pest Control Attitudes and Usage Survey conducted by the Professional Pest Management Alliance (PPMA), two-thirds (66 percent) of current users and 54 percent of those younger than 35 who identified themselves as current users, said that they feel positively towards the industry. Negative attitudes are lowest among current users at two percent, followed by six percent among past users and nine percent among non-users.

Of those respondents with neutral or negative feelings about the industry, 30 percent of all respondents cited chemical use, 29 percent said it was too expensive, 17 percent said it was not
According to the PPMA 2012 Pest Control Attitudes and Usage Survey, 15 percent of the public said the industry was not effective; and 15 percent said the industry was dishonest and not trustworthy.

When broken down by racial and gender lines, the results are as follows: 28 percent of Hispanics say they currently use the services of a pest control company and 37 percent say they feel positively toward the industry. Among Whites, 26 percent are current users and 29 percent feel positive. Just 17 percent of African-Americans currently use professional pest control, but more than half (55 percent) say they have positive feelings. Lastly, eight percent of Asians say they use professional pest control but 35 percent report positive feelings. Women and men are about even in their positive feelings about the industry at 39 and 40 percent respectively.

In regard to reasons as to why they don’t feel positively about the pest control industry, Hispanics, African-Americans and men cited cost (too expensive) as one of the main reasons. The use of chemicals was cited as the main reason for not feeling positively by Whites, Asians and women.¹

These responses demonstrate an opportunity for companies to smooth negative feelings by educating current and potential customers about products and employee training, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and perhaps preferred pricing or affordable payment options to counteract the misconception that pest control services are too expensive. But knowing which segment cares most about what will certainly help companies to align their messaging appropriately.

Winning Them Over

Although it can be difficult for any business to win customers across a variety of cross-section demographics, it’s important for companies to stay attuned to changing trends and shifts around them. Each segment of the market, be it women, Hispanics, African-Americans, generational consumers, urbanites or suburbanites, they are all looking to build a meaningful connection with a brand. Knowing how to deliver what they need can easily result in life-long, loyal customers—no matter which segment of the population they represent. 

Endnote

¹ PPMA will be conducting its Pest Control Attitudes and Usage Survey again in fall 2013 and updated results will be shared with current PPMA investors. If you would like more information, please contact Missy Henriksen at mhenriksen@pestworld.org.
MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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PEST WORLD 2014

OCTOBER 21–24
ORLANDO, FLORIDA

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

MAKING CONNECTIONS • FINDING ANSWERS • INCREASING PROFITS
Q My termite technician found this on the windshield of her truck. What is it?

A I would say your technician is one lucky individual as this is not a very commonly encountered insect! This bizarre looking creature is a called a mantis-fly; a member of the family Mantispidae. Although the triangular head shape, large compound eyes, and raptorial forelegs might make you think this is a praying mantis, it actually belongs in the order Neuroptera. Neuropterans, also known as net-winged insects, are easily identified by the way in which the adults have lacy wings which are held roof-like over their body. You may be more familiar with some of their close relatives, like lacewings and ant-lions.

Like many other Neuropterans, adult mantis-flies are solitary, typically seen after dark, and are active predators of small to mid-sized insects. They use their specially adapted forelegs to quickly strike and grasp their prey. Mantis-flies are considered beneficial because they help reduce insect populations. They range in size from 0.2” to nearly 2” in length and are typically green, yellow or brown. There are about 400 species of mantis-flies worldwide and they are most commonly found in tropical and sub-tropical environments.

Q I saw recently that new label language is required on neonicotinoid insecticides. How will this affect the way that I use these products?

A Neonicotinoids are important tools for our industry, especially in light of recent pyrethroid labeling restrictions. The new label language will help to strengthen protection for bees. NPMA continues to meet with EPA officials to ensure that the agency fully understands how pest management professionals use these products to control nuisance, structural, and public health pests in and around buildings. Currently, in cooperation with state regulatory officials, we are seeking additional clarification regarding the new label language and hope to have more details on how this will impact PMP uses soon. We expect that this is only the first phase in the development of new label language that is intended to help protect bees and NPMA will continue to work with the Agency to ensure that critical PMP uses are preserved.

In addition to dialogue with the EPA, the NPMA Government Affairs and Technical Committees are investigating the issue and will be exploring it in depth over the coming weeks and months. NPMA is also working with the Association of Structural Pest Control Regulatory Officials (ASPCRO) to provide EPA employees with an educational workshop about PMP neonicotinoid uses and pollinator health in October.

PMPs should not expect to see the new label language on products until mid 2014, and we expect to have guidance on how the changes will impact professional uses well in advance.

Q I’ve heard that NPMA has a members-only fuel discount program, how does it work and how do I sign up?

A With today’s rising fuel costs, NPMA realizes that the costs associated with keeping a fleet of trucks and vehicles on the road is an expensive proposition, especially the fuel cost to keep the equipment running. To help members save money on this expense item we have established relationships with ExxonMobil and Shell gas stations to offer participating members fuel discounts on their monthly fuel purchases.

The two programs have a combined access to almost 20,000 gas stations nationwide. Both programs feature an online portal which allows you access to reports, ability to set limits and pay invoices at the click of a button. This allows you control your fleet management costs before they occur. With the ExxonMobile Fleet Card program you can save up to 5 cents a gallon and the Shell Fleet Plus Card can save you up to 3%.
Signing up is easy. You can access the applications by logging into the members’ only section of our website. Under the membership tab, choose member benefits and click on Gasoline Discounts. Here you can print out the application for either program.

Q  I have seen large paper wasps inside a number of my customer’s homes. They are usually fairly docile and are often near the windows. Why are they active in the middle of winter?

A  If you happen to see one or two lone wasps inside the house this spring, don’t be alarmed, it’s probably just an overwintering queen that has become trapped indoors. Cold temperatures kill paper wasp colonies each winter, but before they are eliminated, the colonies produce male wasps to mate with a few lucky females who will be next summer’s queens. These mated females overwinter in sheltered places like under logs or behind loose tree bark to survive the dipping temperatures. Often these overwintering future-queens will climb behind siding or through attic vents to seek shelter.

As temperatures warm in the spring, most of these wasps “wake up” from their winter slumber and fly outside where they will begin the work of building a new nest, laying eggs and hunting for food to feed developing larvae. But instead of flying out, some overwintering wasps find their way into the living spaces of homes. You might see some of these wasps flying around windows attempting to exit. Often they seem sluggish or clumsy; this is because they are just waking up from their “long winter nap”. In most cases, overwintering queen wasps are docile, although they are capable of stinging, they generally are more interested in getting outside than bothering humans. «
UNDERSTANDING HEALTH CARE REFORM
MUST KNOW ASPECTS OF STAYING COMPLIANT

BY GARY SHAPIRO
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF WEISBURGER INSURANCE BROKERAGE

Under new health care reform regulations, a “large employer” (defined as an employer who employed an average of at least 50 full-time employees for a calendar year) will be subject to a penalty under the federal HCR law if it fails to provide minimum value health benefits to all full-time workers. Looming questions about health care reform are a major concern for businesses across the pest control industry, and the large amount of information being provided seems overwhelming. Below are some of the essential “must know” aspects of PPACA compliance that you, the employer, should be sure to be familiar with:

1. All you have to do offer but be prepared!
Original PPACA regulations mandated that employers provide health coverage starting as early January 1, 2014, however recently an extension has been given until 2015 for penalties to begin. Don’t let the extra year fool you, there is a lot of preparation to be done and the time to start is now. The key to this mandate is that all you have to do is offer this to your employees! An employer complies by offering an affordable minimum plan, if the employee waives coverage; there is no penalty to the employer. If you have already offered coverage, and employees did not take it—then you can delay and wait until anniversary date of benefits (renewal) to provide benefit plan options.

2. Set Premiums for “Affordability” & Avoid Penalties:
Employers cannot charge an employee more than 9.5% of household income, for single coverage premium. Under reform rules, an employer subject to HCR must offer “affordable” coverage of a minimum value plan to employees. Technically, that means the employee’s share of the self-only premium for the lowest cost coverage cannot exceed 9.5% of the employee’s household income. Please note this is for those employees earning up to 400% of the Federal Poverty Level (approx. $44,600).

3. Dependents:
An employer does not have to offer coverage to spouses. Rather, an employer is only required to offer the coverage to children. This clarification means an employer can decide to not offer coverage to spouses, though such a plan is unlikely to be viewed as a very generous benefit. Even an employer that does offer coverage to spouses could limit eligibility to spouses who have no other coverage, or place other restrictions on spouses’ eligibility. Second, the coverage offered to the children does not have to be affordable. (This has been a common question, so this clarity is welcomed.) Finally, it has been assumed that if an employer offered affordable coverage to the employee, the family members could still access federal assistance such as tax credits to purchase coverage through an insurance exchange. However, that is not true. Now, the federal government says when an employer offers affordable coverage to the employee, the family members of the employee cannot qualify for any federal tax credits or other assistance. These family members instead could still use the exchange to purchase a policy, but must pay the full amount of the premium for that coverage.

4. Stay up to date with compliance, as it is always changing and updating!
As of May 17, 2013, New Disclosure Obligation: Among the many changes directed under federal law, special rules will require a new employer to provide notice to workers. The new rule generally requires any employer subject to the Fair Labor
Standards Act (FLSA) to disclose information about plan options available to employees. Specifically, the new disclosure rule requires all employers to notify all employees about the new state and federal insurance exchanges.

The requirement to send the notice to an employee applies regardless of whether an employee works full or part time. The notice must be sent to all current employees by October 1, 2013. The employer must send the notice to new hires starting October 1, 2013 or after generally within 14 days of date of hire.

Two model notices have been made available: one for employers who offer health plan coverage to some or all of their employees, and one for employers who do not offer any health plan to any employee.

As with other mandated notice requirements, a direct penalty is not specified for failure to comply with the notice obligation. Instead, the participant has rights under ERISA (Employee Retirement Income Security Act) to recover damages sustained as a result of the failure to receive information as directed under law.

Bottom line, find a trusted advisor; work together to develop a strategy and come up with a viable solution before it's too late! An experienced and knowledgeable advisor will not only ensure that your business is compliant with reform, but will most importantly discuss a strategy to avoid any negative impact of this legislation on your business.

For an expert consultation, please contact Weisburger Insurance Brokerage at 800-431-2794, info@weisburger.com, or visit our site at www.weisburger.com. Weisburger, a division of Program Brokerage Corporation, is the nationally endorsed insurance broker of the National Pest Management Association (NPMA).
While the rewards of seeing our business grow and succeed over the years, a need to help those less fortunate, especially in the area of pest control, has become a mission for my wife, Donna and I. With this growing desire to give back, I have come to learn of the devastation malaria is having on millions of people, especially children and pregnant women, in many parts of Africa. A female, night-biting Anopheles mosquito infected with the Plasmodium parasite, spreads malaria.

The Center for Disease Control reports that there are approximately 300–500 million new cases of malaria each year. Over 2,000 children die every day from a disease that can be prevented. Approximately every 45 seconds a child dies of malaria in Africa. Those who are most vulnerable to malaria, such as children under the age of 5, and pregnant women, need protection against being bitten while they sleep by infected mosquitoes.

Fortunately, in the last ten years, eleven countries have slashed malaria deaths and cases by at least half, with the use of mosquito nets, malaria tests, and spraying insecticides inside homes. Mosquito nets have been provided to cover 76 percent of Africa’s at-risk population and this alone has saved the lives of an estimated 908,000 children between the years 2000 and 2010.

It is incomprehensible to imagine that millions are dying from a disease that can easily be avoided with the use of a pre-treated mosquito net that costs as little as $7.00. As such, my wife and I have made a commitment to donate pre-treated mosquito nets to families in Tanzania, Africa and other nearby villages.

Our idea to help in Africa was prompted by our Pastor and missionary friend, Dave Schuit from Hawthorne Gospel Church. He shared with the church the devastation malaria was having on villages in Tanzania, Africa. As we sat there and listened, my wife and I both felt an immediate connection to this cause. Pastor David suggested we contact African Inland Mission International (AIM) (www.aimint.org). The objective of this organization is to meet the spiritual and physical needs of the African people. Our role is to help meet the physical need and protection from malaria by providing the nets through AIM.

I have been blessed to have many opportunities to give back. In fact, a few summers ago my family and I had an opportunity to serve in Africa on a trip with Athletes in Action (www.athletesinaction.org). As part of this trip, my four sons and I spent the mornings coaching basketball clinics for the athletes of Nairobi at the AIA Basketball Training Camp.

In the early afternoons the entire team headed to Soweto Academy, a school in the slum of Kibera, the largest slum in Africa and third largest in the world. There, our team provided different programs and physical education classes for elementary, middle and high school students. Our entire family had the privilege to work with the students at this school.

Our idea to help in Africa was prompted by our Pastor and missionary friend, Dave Schuit from Hawthorne Gospel Church. He shared with the church the devastation malaria was having on villages in Tanzania, Africa.
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Getting to the school each day was a challenge. Witnessing such unimaginable poverty was probably the hardest and most heartbreaking part of the trip. In fact, my family and I will never forget those images, sounds and smells of what was once a garbage dump is now home for over 1,000,000 people. Their homes, made of mud and sticks, are no larger than a 12’ x 12’ space, have no running water, bathrooms and in some case no electricity. As we walked less than a mile down a dusty road each day to get to the school, we witnessed human defecation spilling over from the trenches along side the muddy alleys. As the wind blew, we were taken aback by the nauseating and intermingled smells of burning garbage, sewage and farm animal feces.

As my family taught at the school, I had the opportunity to meet with Kenyan businessmen to discuss marketing and business strategies. The students at Soweto Academy are bright and speak fluent English. In fact, this school is one of the highest-ranking schools in Kenya. Yet, no opportunity for financial aid or scholarship currently exists for these students due to widespread government corruption. I guess I became somewhat of a hero to many of the students in Kibera after I handed over 400 rubber cockroaches to each child! Kids were “crawling out of the woodwork” to get their own rubber cockroach!

Our trip concluded with a two-day Safari to the Masai Mara Reserves. Witnessing wild animals such as lions, hyenas and hippopotamuses roaming in their natural habitat, and at such close proximity is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Although nothing compared to the huge termite mounds I saw! Many exotic and familiar pests were observed on a daily basis. You can’t drive through Nairobi’s city streets without seeing hundreds of pigeons and other exotic birds landing on many city buildings. We would wake up each morning to squawking ravens or lie awake at night to the sounds of frightened zebra stampeding through our campground for safety from hungry lions. These were small reminders that we were far away from home.

Many of our friends and employees partnered with us to help those living in Kibera. Bug Doctor employees Sherry Carlson donated women’s crosses to wear, Kimberly Periard bought children’s clothes for us to bring, and, on the home front, our boys gave their favorite jerseys, T-shirts, and lots of candy to the African kids! The male teachers at Soweto Academy were delighted with the ties I brought them, an appreciated tip from Jeff Kimmich from Arizona Wings & Stings, and the female teachers were grateful for the scarves my wife, Donna brought them.

The reality is, you don’t have to go overseas to help those less fortunate. We all have the opportunity to serve right here in the U.S. There are countless ways we can help those less fortunate with their pest control needs. Services can be donated to churches, widows, a poor family, or homeless shelters. You won’t believe the difference you can make.

Donna and Stuart Aust are the owners of Bug Doctor Termite & Pest Control/Bird Doctor Nationwide. Stuart can be reached at (201) 599-1007, ext. 114, or stuart@bugdoctorinc.com.
MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

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ACADEMY 2014

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JULY 17-19
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 5–6
GLOBAL BED BUG SUMMIT
Denver, Colorado

JANUARY 9–11, 2014
WILDLIFE EXPO
New Orleans, Louisiana

JANUARY 22–24, 2014
EASTERN CONFERENCE
Tarrytown, New York

JANUARY 27–29, 2014
NPMA/PLANET LAWN CARE SUMMIT
Nashville, Tennessee

JANUARY 29–30, 2014
SOUTHWESTERN CONFERENCE
Albuquerque, New Mexico

FEBRUARY 11–12, 2014
SOUTHERN CONFERENCE
Tunica, Mississippi

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